DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 295 746 PS 017 404

TITLE	Primary Education in Cyprus. Project No. 8: Innovation in Primary Education.
INSTITUTION	Council for Cultural Cooperation, Strasbourg (France).
REPORT NO	DECS/EGT-84-95-rev
PUB DATE	13 Apr 88
NOTE	9p.; For related documents on the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) Project No. 8 on "Innovation in Primary Education", see PS 017 402-406 and PS 017 415-417.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Class Size; Coordination; *Educational Change; Educational Cooperation; *Educational Objectives; Educational Responsibility; Educational Trends; Elementary School Curriculum; Family School Relationship; Foreign Countries; Grouping (Instructional Purposes; *Primary Education; Program Descriptions; *Public Schools; School Community Relationship; School Schedules; Services; Student Evaluation; Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Cyprus

ABSTRACT

This report provides an overview of primary education in Cyprus. Section 1 delineates: (1) official aims; (2) responsibility for the organization of primary education at national, regional, local, and school levels; (3) links between pre-primary and primary education and between primary and lower secondary education; (4) number of primary school pupils and teachers; (5) arrangements for grouping pupils and official class sizes; (6) length of the school day, the school week, and the school year; (7) major areas of the primary school curriculum; (8) main methods of pupil assessment; (9) arrangements for the initial and in-service training of teachers; (10) support services; and (11) institutional links between the primary school, parents, and the community. Section 2 briefly identifies problems, trends, and intended changes or reforms. Section 3 provides bibliographic information about a study of the primary school curriculum and a study of teacher opinions of leadership qualities needed by school principals and inspectors. (RH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED295746

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

DECS/EGT (84) 95 rev.

Project No. 8:
"Innovation in primary education"

Primary education in Cyprus

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Council of Europe
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PS 017104

Council for Cultural Co-operation

Strasbourg 1988

Strasbourg 13 April 1988 DECS/EGT (84) 95 rev.

COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

INNOVATION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN CYPRUS

Report submitted by

the Cypriot authorities

1.0 AIMS, CONTENT AND ORGANISATION

1.1 Official aims

The general aim of education in Cyprus is the development of free and democratic citizens with a fully developed personality, mentally and morally refined, healthy, active and creative, who will contribute with their work and their conscientious activity in general to the social, scientific, economic and cultural progress of our country and to the promotion of the co-operation, mutual understanding and love among men and peoples for the prevalence of freedom, justice and peace.

Education in Cyprus helps the new generation:

(a) to assimilate the spiritual and other achievements as well as the fruitful elements of the past,

(b) to capitalize on all the possibilities of the present, and

(c) to proceed to new achievements, in all sectors of the social activity, drawing lessons from the past.

More specifically the basic objectives of Primary Education are:

- The full mental, physical and emotional development of the pupils, through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes, necessary for the contemporary life.

- The proper understanding of the world, through the systematic observation and study of the surrounding natural and social phenomena.

- The knowledge of history, particularly the national, and the achievements of civilization.

- The training of the pupils for the right use of the language and the development of their ability to express themselves clearly and with precision.

- The development by the pupils of:

  . Love for their country, humanitarian ideals and democratic attitudes.

  . Respect for work, social conscience and responsibility.

  . Conscious discipline and ability to safeguard and exercise their rights.

  . Understanding, respect of other people's ideas, initiative, co-operation and friendship.

  . Interests, talents and inclinations.

- The preservation and development of the pupils health and the necessary skills and attitudes.

- The aesthetic education and systematic acquaintance of the pupils with the works of art of the national and international civilization.

1.2 Responsibility for the organisation of primary education at national, regional, local and school level

Cyprus educational system in general is centralised. The Ministry of Education (Department of Primary Education) is responsible for the formulation of educational policy in all areas (administration, curricula, books etc) and through its inspectors evaluation and supervision are exercised. The system, however, gives opportunities to interested parties (teachers' and parents' associations) to participate in the process of policy formulation.

1.3 Links between pre-primary and primary education and between primary and lower secondary education

Pre-primary education is the responsibility of the Department of Primary Education, thus an easy transition of children from the kindergarten to the primary school is maintained. Some kindergartens are in the same buildings with the primary schools, so close contacts exist among children and teachers of the two levels.

Lower secondary grades belong to the Secondary Education Department and so apart from some efforts for co-ordination of curricula, at the central administration level, very few official opportunities exist for contacts and ties between primary school and lower secondary education. In fact some gaps are sometimes observed, mainly in the methodology approaches, between the two levels, because of the lack of prescribed procedures of co-operation.

Recently compulsory education has been extended up to the 15th year of age (6 years primary and 3 years secondary), and serious efforts are in progress for the preparation of a unified curriculum for the nine years of compulsory education.

1.4 Number of primary school pupils and teachers.

During the school year 1986-1987 the number of Primary Schools in Cyprus was 361 with a total pupil population of 52,066. The number of teachers during the same year was 2,236.

1.5 Arrangements for grouping pupils and official class sizes

Pupils are grouped for instruction according to age (grade level), regardless of ability. Only pupils with severe retardation attend special schools. Special needs by certain pupils are met in their regular classroom through individualization of instruction by the teacher. Very rarely some pupils leave their regular class-group for a short time each day to have individual help by a special teacher.

This is the rule in schools where there are enough pupils of the same class to form a group. In the rural schools, however, where the number of pupils is very small, multi-age grouping is employed. In such schools groups are formed by 1st + 2nd graders, 3rd + 4th, and 5th + 6th. In smaller schools we find groups of 1st + 2nd + 3rd graders and 4th + 5th + 6th graders and in even smaller schools the whole elementary school, all six grades, is one group with one teacher.

The official class size is 34 pupils maximum. For the single teacher school the maximum number of pupils is 25 and for the two-teacher school 50.

1.6 Length of the school day, the school week and the school year

Lessons in the Primary Schools start on the 15th of September each year and finish on the 28th of June. There are two weeks of vacation for Christmas and another two for Easter. The number of working days is approximately 210. The working day lasts from 8.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. every day, for six days a week.

1.7 Major areas of the primary school curriculum

The major areas of the Primary School curriculum are: Language (Greek), Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, Home Economics and English.

1.8 Main methods of pupil assessment

The assessment and evaluation of pupils' performance is achieved mainly by the following methods:

- Continuous observation and record keeping by the teacher.
- Testing (formative and summative evaluation).
- Self-assessment on the part of the pupil.

Emphasis is given to self-evaluation by the pupils and to the progress that each individual makes, in relation to his/her previous standards.

1.9 Arrangements for the initial and in-service training of teachers

1.9.1 Initial training

All primary school teachers are graduates of the Pedagogical Academy (Teachers' Training College) of Cyprus, an institution of tertiary education with a three-year programme of studies.

1.9.2 In-service training

It takes many forms, such as the following:

(a) Meetings of teaching staff: They are called by the headmaster once a week for the discussion of subjects arising from the school work.

(b) Seminars held in small areas: These are organised by the inspectors regularly throughout the year. Some of these seminars deal with subjects concerning school administration and are attended only by headmasters. The majority of seminars, however, deal with topics which interest all teachers such as: classroom atmosphere, the teaching of the various subjects, pupil evaluation, grouping of pupils etc.

(c) Courses organised by the Pedagogical Institute: Many short courses are organised every year by the Pedagogical Institute, on a variety of subjects, and are attended by the teachers, on a voluntary basis. Sometimes experts from abroad conduct these courses, within the framework of educational exchanges with other countries and UNESCO programmes.

(d) Scholarships: A small number of teachers, each year, have the opportunity for further training abroad, through scholarships.

(e) Radio and television broadcasts: Both radio and television broadcasts are used for in-service training of teachers.

(f) Independent study: Teachers are encouraged to keep abreast of new developments through independent study. To facilitate such study the Ministry of Education keeps an education library. Also an "Education Bulletin" is published regularly every two months, and is distributed free to all teachers.

1.10 Support Services

(a) A school-medical service operates more or less adequately in the towns, where doctors and school nurses visit schools, and examine children. The schools in the rural areas, however, are less often served by such units.

(b) There are seven psychologists in the "Counselling and Guidance Service" of the Ministry of Education, who examine cases of primary school children with mental or general behaviour problems, and advise headmasters and teachers accordingly.

(c) Advisers (for each subject) visit schools regularly and work with the teachers, helping them with demonstration lessons, teaching methods and materials.

1.11 Institutional links between the primary school, parents and the community

The basic links between the primary schools and the community and parents are the "School Committees" and the "Parents and Teachers Associations". The School Committees' role is mainly concentrated on school buildings, furniture, equipment and their maintenance, whereas P.T.A.s cater for the welfare of the pupils, and in general they demonstrate a keen interest in the whole school programme. The "School for the Parents" is another institution which plays an important role in the education of parents, on matters relevant to their children's school-life and their general development.

2.0 PROBLEMS, TRENDS AND INTENDED CHANGES OR REFORMS

(a) The main problems in Primary Education are:

- The many small rural schools and the opposition presented by the parents, in the efforts by the Ministry to consolidate them.
- The in-service training of teachers.
- The provision of special education to persons who need it, and they are scattered in small rural communities.
- The short duration of the children's attendance to school.
- Teachers' evaluation.

(b) A major trend is the more active participation of both children and parents in all aspects of the school life. This is encouraged by the system because it is believed that through this participation responsibility is developed and the democratisation principle is adequately served.

A second trend is the "main streaming" idea. Children, regardless of ability are grouped together, when they are of the same age. Only in cases of severe retardation children attend special schools.

(c) The expansion of the duration of the school-day, in combination with the abolition of Saturday's work, is a change which currently is under serious consideration.

3.0 IMPORTANT STUDIES

(a) Title: Curriculum for the Primary Schools

Author: Department of Primary Education

Publisher: Ministry of Education

Date of publication: 1981

Number of pages: 326

Contents: After a short foreword and a brief reference to the main characteristics of pre-primary and primary school children, the aims, objectives, content, methodology and evaluation suggestions are mentioned, for each subject taught in pre-primary and primary school.

(b) Title: Leadership qualities needed by principals and inspectors - Opinions of teachers in Cyprus.

Author: A. Papadopoulos, Inspector General, Ministry of Education.

Publisher: A. Papadopoulos

Date of publication: 1980

Number of pages: 26

Contents: The opinions of teachers are investigated, regarding the qualities needed by principals and inspectors, through a questionnaire. A certain set of qualities is finally identified.